

108-172
**Postville Is applying to become
one of Iowa's Great Places**

Thursday evening a group of about 50 business and property owners, along with community leaders gathered at the new city hall chambers to hear a presentation on the possibility of having Postville become one of Iowa's Great Places.

Anita Walker, director of the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs, spoke to the group about the project. The program, she explained, is a

chance for Postville to grow, support community and retail sales as well as provide new opportunities for others.

By inviting the state to become our partner in making Postville an Iowa Great Place the committee has envisioned creating an International Arch Event Center to highlight the international flavor of Postville. It

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is hoped, said committee members Nina Taylor and Gary Simmons, Sr., this will attract different ethnic stores to promote the arts and flavor of Postville's diverse population. It is further envisioned that an arch of this type would become an event center, highlighting events such as "Taste of Postville."

A downtown hotel is also a part of the plan. Committee person Taylor said, "Ramada Inn has approved Postville for a future hotel to accommodate our ever-increasing tourist and business growth. It was noted that tourism is a \$4 billion industry in Iowa and Postville could be receiving a greater share of those dollars. Seventy-five percent of retiring "baby boomers" have expressed their desire to tour America. It is important for Heritage Areas, such as Postville, to offer a variety of opportunities.

The vision is further enhanced by goals which include the recreational trail, a community center, soccer field (lights and bleachers), lights and bleachers at our fairgrounds/campgrounds, welcome signs at all entrances to our town and much more.

Where will the money for these project come from?

Money is available through grants for projects such as those being proposed by the committee. Eighteen agencies, both public and private are working with the Iowa Great Places program. State agencies will come to the communities that are chosen with the help they can offer. The chosen community will NOT have to seek out each possible type of assistance. Great Places has described the program as a "One Stop Shop" for state programs. They say, "We will help you find the state services that fit your vision and walk you through the process to access them."

How do we become an Iowa Great Place?

Walker told those present that of all the cities and projects to apply, only three will be chosen. Two coaches will be sent to Postville within the next few weeks to help the committee complete its proposal which must be submitted to the state by September 1. She said the committee should be creative and have confidence. Adding, "If you want it, you can have it."

Anyone who wishing to work with the coaches and the committee is asked to contact Taylor at, 563-864-7247. Current committee members are Taylor, Simmons, Dave Day, Aaron Goldsmith, Merle Turner, Lilia Tinderholt and Chaim Abrahams.

As committee member Merle Turner said, "This project just feels right for Postville. The timing seems right. We just need to hurry and get it done so we can enjoy its benefits."

